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# The Tribune

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**WOMAN**  
**TEENAGE MODEL SOARING HIGH**  
**SEE WOMAN ON PAGE 12B**



**PRIMARY SCHOOL BASKETBALL**  
**GIANTS POUNDED BY STRIKERS**  
**SEE SPORTS SECTION E**



# Two MPs quit FNM party

## Wright and Grant to leave government



**FNM NO MORE:** Clifton MP Kendal Wright and Eight Mile Rock MP Verna Grant.

**By PAUL G TURNQUEST**  
Chief Reporter  
[pturnquest@tribunemedia.net](mailto:pturnquest@tribunemedia.net)

Grant intend to make their announcement when the House of Assembly meets at 10am Wednesday.

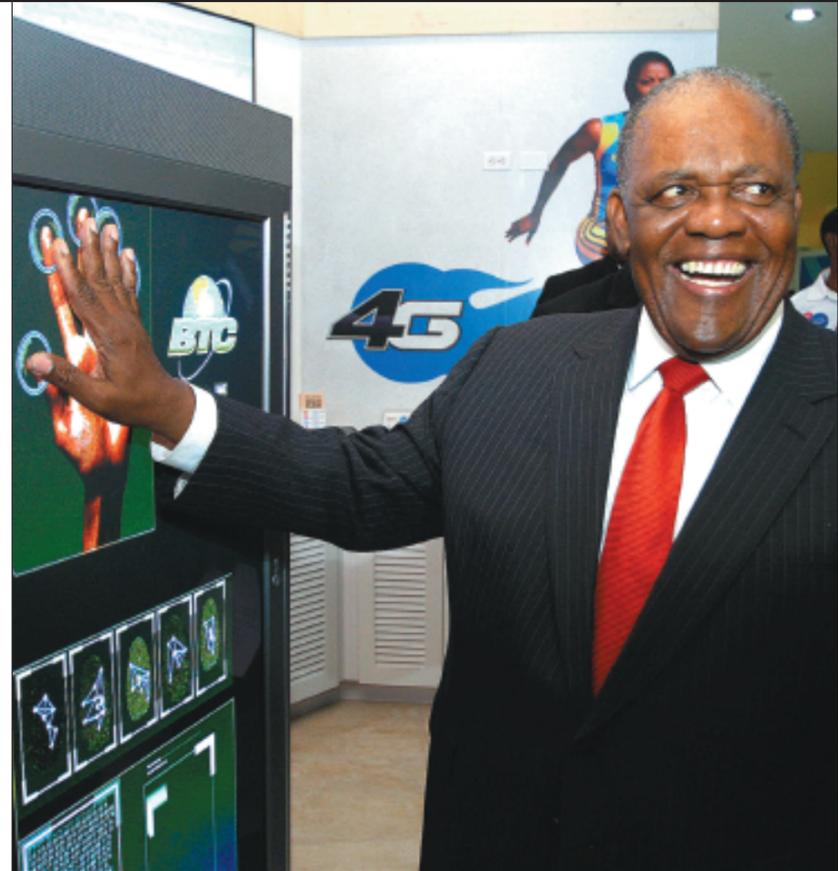
Having both expressed their disapproval in the recent boundary cuts where they saw their seats eliminated, these MPs' decision to leave the governing party has reduced the government's majority in the House of Assembly to 21 - with the Official Opposition

**See page 7**

CLIFTON Member of Parliament Kendal Wright and Eight Mile Rock MP Verna Grant are to tender their resignations from the Free National Movement, *The Tribune* can reveal.

According to numerous sources within the party and others close to the respective MPs, Mr Wright and Mrs

## BAHAMAS 4G NETWORK GOES LIVE



**PRIME MINISTER** Hubert Ingraham takes part in a ceremony marking the opening of the new wireless service and flagship BTC store at the Mall at Marathon. Photo: **Felipe Major/Tribune Staff**

**By AVA TURNQUEST**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
[aturnquest@tribunemedia.net](mailto:aturnquest@tribunemedia.net)

THE Bahamas Telecommunications Company rolled out its long-awaited 4G, high-speed network in New Providence last night.

The company also unveiled its new flagship store, which was said to be the first of some 50 new stores slated to be opened throughout the country.

Acknowledging the milestone, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham under-

scored the importance of improved telecommunications infrastructure and electronic media on various sectors, especially tourism and commerce.

"Overwhelmingly, people today book their travel, choose their vacation destinations, select their hotels and select their tours on line," he said.

"Today, international financial services, such as local banking, are conducted overwhelmingly online; meetings take place via teleconference calls and bids and

trades are placed electronically."

Mr Ingraham added: "The majority of the retail stores will be owned and operated by Bahamian entrepreneurs creating more investment opportunities for enterprising Bahamians."

The introduction of 4G is the latest in a series of improvements in service and rate reductions since the company was privatised six months ago.

The network, a \$43m

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## NIGHTCLUB OWNER: 'BAY ST FIRE WAS ARSON'

**By DANA SMITH**  
[dsmith@tribunemedia.net](mailto:dsmith@tribunemedia.net)

THE owner of a cultural gem turned popular nightclub believes last week's Bay Street fire, which destroyed his property and others nearby, could have been an arson attack.

Dalton Mitchell, owner of the 19th century former chapel at the western end of Bay Street, which for some years now has been known as Da Balcony club, described the fire as a "serious tragedy".

He said: "Hopefully, the police will find the person who has done it.

"I think it was arson due to the fact there was no particular reason the market could have caught on fire.

"The cause could be questionable because it could have been an accident, but either way I think it was an act of negligence."

The building that houses Da Balcony was planned to be a part of Downtown Nassau Partnership's (DNP) redevelopment plan which aims to beautify the downtown area.

Mr Mitchell said he and the DNP had reached an agreement, before the fire, concern-

**See page 7**

## RANDY STAYS BEHIND BARS

**By LAMECH JOHNSON**  
[ljohnson@tribunemedia.net](mailto:ljohnson@tribunemedia.net)

A COURT of Appeal hearing to receive submissions on whether or not Bishop Randy Fraser should receive bail pending the appeal of his conviction has been delayed by 10 days, due to an important document not being presented in court yesterday.

The Pilgrim Baptist Temple leader will return to the country's second highest court on Friday, December 16, at 10 am before appellate court president Justice Anita Allen and Justices Stanley John and Abdulai Conteh.

Having already spent his first five nights of three years behind bars, he appeared before Court of Appeal Justices where his attorney, Jiam Mangra presented an application for bail to the court.

In yesterday's brief hearing, Mr Mangra told the court that while he was not in possession of the written arguments to submit to the court,

**See page 7**

**Employee Profile - Les Carey**  
Like a policeman directing traffic, Les Carey, Delivery Specialist/Supervisor at JBR Building Supplies, expertly directs a team of drivers and vehicles to and from customers' homes and work sites throughout the day.  
Carey, who started out working in the sales department at JBR, has an acute appreciation for the importance of getting customers deliveries out in a timely manner and the inherent challenges this presents. "It's not always easy coordinating the orders, customers and drivers but we always do our best to get deliveries out as efficiently as possible. It can be challenging at times but I love what I'm doing," Carey says.  
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LOCAL NEWS



GOVERNOR GENERAL Sir Arthur Foulkes plays with a young patient at Princess Margaret Hospital, as part of his tour of the facility. Photos: Felipe Major/Tribune Staff

# A matter of the heart



SIR Arthur Foulkes made his annual visit to Princess Margaret Hospital yesterday. The Governor General's visit was part of the traditional pre-Christmas activities at the hospital.

The hospital chairman, Veta Brown, said the theme of the celebrations this year was that "Caring is a Matter of the Heart".

During Sir Arthur's visit, festive hymns were sung, before the Governor General himself delivered the Christmas greetings.

He toured a number of the wards in the hospital, stopping to take time to talk to patients and staff, and even play with some of the younger patients.

Chief hospital administrator Coralie Adderly said: "We are so blessed to enjoy another Yuletide season, and to welcome the Governor General for his annual visit."

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LADY JOAN FOULKES joined Sir Arthur on his tour of the hospital.



LOCAL NEWS



**FIREFIGHTERS** outside the Pompey Museum in the wake of the blaze on Bay St.

# ‘Museum destroyed in fire will return’

By **DANA SMITH**  
dsmith@tribunemedia.net

DESPITE the “charred mess” which remains of the historic Pompey Museum following the last week’s Bay Street fire, most of the artifacts were saved, and one historian is confident the building will be restored.

Dr Gail Saunders, who established the Pompey Museum in 1992 and serves as deputy chairman of the Antiquities, Monuments, and Museums Corporation board, said of the destruction: “Let’s not count it as a loss.”

“Remember, the Pompey Museum was partially damaged by fire 10 years ago and it was re-restored,” Dr Saunders said.

“We feel confident that it can be, and will be, restored again.”

Dr Saunders said although she previously thought the museum “had lost everything” to the fire, staff who entered the remains of the building were able to salvage most of the artifacts.

“If you had looked inside the building at 6 or 7am, you

wouldn’t have believed anything was saved. It was a charred mess,” Dr Saunders said.

Among the items saved include the original metal shackles used on slaves and a library of rare books on slavery.

Dr Saunders spoke on the historical significance of the museum, as well as St Cuthbert’s Chapel, which was also destroyed by the fire.

“I think these fires bring it home that we have to realise these buildings are very, very important,” Dr Saunders said.

“The people of the Bahamas have to know their history and appreciate it.”

The building which houses the Pompey Museum, named Vendue House, is the oldest building in Nassau, dating back to 1769, according to Dr Saunders.

“It’s where slave sales occurred and also sales of all sorts of goods,” she said.

“People gathered there not only to sell things, but also to socialise, talk, and gossip. So that building in itself is valuable, it’s a heritage house.”

St Cuthbert’s Church, which is next door to Vendue House, is sometimes described as The Seaman’s Chapel, Dr Saunders explained.

“When the sponge fishermen came into Nassau, they went out on voyages that were about six weeks long. They came and they worshipped there,” Dr Saunders said.

Following its use as a church, the building had been used for several other purposes including a photography studio, a seamstress shop, and most recently, a bar and restaurant named Da Balcony.

Dr Saunders stated these two buildings are historic and important not only to the Bahamian people, but tourists who visit Nassau.

“We are a tourist destination and we have to cater to them and give them interesting things to visit,” she said. “Heritage tourism is very important all over.”

“Tourists are not only after sun, sand, and sea, they want to know about the history of each country they visit. The

museum is particularly relevant there. It’s a great historic site.”

## BAHA MAR BACKS SALVATION ARMY

THE Baha Mar resort development has announced the Baha Mar Challenge – an effort to match, dollar-for-dollar up to \$10,000, all donations made to the Salvation Army during the holiday season.

Sarkis Izmirlian, chairman of Baha Mar Ltd, said the initiative aims to help boost donations to the Salvation Army so the charity can continue to help needy individuals and families.

Donations may be made in cash or by cheque made

payable to the Salvation Army at “Red Kettles” and in the lobbies of both the Wyndham Nassau Resort and the Sheraton Nassau Beach Resort – both Baha Mar properties.

Donations may also be dropped off in person or by mail to the Salvation Army’s Nassau office, at 31 Mackey Street, PO Box N-205, Nassau, the Bahamas.

The company hopes it “will need to match the entire \$10,000 for this very worthy cause”.

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## MAN DENIED BAIL OVER AMMUNITION CHARGES

By **LAMECH JOHNSON**  
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

A MAN accused of being found with drugs, ammunition and a bullet-proof vest was denied bail in Magistrate’s Court yesterday.

Stanley Wallace, 36, of Sandy Lane appeared before Gun Court Magistrate Joyanne Pratt-Ferguson.

He was charged with possession of marijuana with the intent to supply; possession of 50 .9mm bullets with the intent to supply; and possession of body armour without the proper authority.

The offences are alleged to have taken place on Wednesday, November 16.

Wallace, whose alias is Stanley Brown, was not required to enter a plea to the charges.

When the subject of bail was raised, the prosecution argued that according to new

laws, the Magistrate’s Court has no discretion to grant bail because of the nature of the charges.

It was also pointed out that the accused has a previous drug possession conviction.

The matter was adjourned to March 8, 2012, to give the prosecution time to determine whether it wishes to proceed with a trial in Magistrate’s Court, or have the case forwarded to the Supreme Court by way of a Voluntary Bill of Indictment.

Defence attorney Anthony Newbold told the magistrate he had no objection to the date chosen, but asked that on that day, the prosecution be prepared to move forward.

Magistrate Ferguson-Pratt agreed and informed the prosecution that if it did not present a Voluntary Bill of Indictment on March 8, a trial would proceed.

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BILLY’S DREAM STILL ALIVE

## TWO MEN QUIZZED OVER FIREARM FIND

By **DENISE MAYCOCK**  
Tribune Freeport Reporter  
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – Police took two men in for questioning on Sunday after a firearm was discovered at a shopping plaza in Caravel Beach.

Asst Supt Loretta Mackey, press liaison officer, reported that a 19-year-old youth and 25-year-old man, both of Freeport, were detained

around midnight at the Britannia Mini Mall on Polaris Drive.

Police were called at around 11:45pm when a man was seen brandishing a handgun in the area.

During a search, a black Taurus 9mm pistol with five live rounds of ammunition were confiscated.

The man and the teenager are helping officers with their investigation.

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## Is an election nearer than expected?

THIS MORNING dawns with an interesting political scene developing and depending on which way the wheel turns, we might be facing an election just after Christmas.

Miffed because their electoral seats were vaporised by the Boundaries Commission, two of the FNM's MPs have resigned from the party.

Although their resignations have been confirmed to *The Tribune* by reliable sources, the FNM have heard the rumours, but have no facts. FNM chairman Carl Bethel was still manning the post in the FNM's headquarters up to 5:30pm yesterday, but no letter of resignation had arrived from either Eight Mile Rock MP Verna Grant or Clifton MP Kendal Wright.

Neither was it clear whether they had only resigned from the party or whether they had also resigned from parliament. If the latter, as one person put it, we shall be faced with a "constitutional conundrum". However, up until late yesterday, Speaker Alvin Smith had seen no resignation letters.

We understand that, whatever the decision, they will keep it close to their chests until Wednesday when parliament again meets. It is not until then that the bugles will sound and candidates will know how soon they will have to move into their constituencies.

If the two cross the floor on Wednesday, do they go as Independents, or do they join the PLP — or maybe even the DNA?

The FNM, which entered the House after the 2007 general election with 23 members to the PLP's 18, were left with 22 members on the floor when North Eleuthera MP Alvin Smith was elected from their number to become Speaker of the House.

During the course of the next four years, the PLP lost one member in Kenyatta Gibson, who crossed the floor to the FNM to bring their number back to the original 23. Recently, Branville McCartney left the FNM to form the DNA and become that party's only MP. If the reports about Ms Grant and Mr Wright are true, it means that the FNM will lose another two members, reducing their number on the floor to 20. It is not known whether the last two possible defections will cross the floor as Independents or whether they will join a party. Should they join the PLP, that party's numbers will be boosted to 19. Whether they join a party or remain Independent, the governing 20-member FNM will face a 20-member Opposition — PLP (17), Independents (2) and DNA (1).

This means that should there be full attendance on both sides of the House at every meeting, all eyes will turn to their bewigged Speaker on his dais above them

to break a tie or to get a measure through parliament.

However, should one or both defecting members resign from parliament a bye-election will have to be called within 60 days. This is most unlikely to happen. It is more likely that parliament will be dissolved. And so Bahamians will be facing either dissolution or a long recess of the House.

Of course bye-elections cannot be held in non-existent constituencies, which Clifton and Eight Mile Rock will soon be, if they are not already. It is probable that, if a bye-election were held, it would be held in the newly-named constituencies that would have absorbed the voters of Clifton and Eight Mile Rock. And should any FNM member attempt to run against any candidate already nominated by the party for these two new constituencies they are automatically expelled under the FNM party's rules.

This turn of events takes us back to January 10, 1967 when the PLP won its first election.

In that election, the United Bahamian Party, headed by Sir Roland Symonette — the Bahamas' first premier — won 18 seats. The PLP also won 18 seats. A tie — no winner. Either the UBP or the PLP had to sacrifice one of their number from the floor to be House Speaker. Whichever side did it would be left with 17 members to the other's 18.

However, there were two floating members — Alvin Braynen, representative of the Current, and labour leader Randol Fawkes. For several days, they were the most courted men in the Bahamas as each UBP and PLP sought them out to join their party to break the tie. Sir Alvin was a UBP, but before the election there had been a quarrel and he walked out. The UBP were most anxious to mend fences with Sir Alvin. But both Braynen and Fawkes wanted something. Randol Fawkes wanted to be the Labour czar and Alvin Braynen told us that his life-long dream was to become Speaker of the House. Here it was being handed to him on a silver platter, and no other consideration was going to stop him snatching the prize. The PLP got both Alvin Braynen as Speaker, and Randol Fawkes broke the tie by one on the floor of the House, which enabled Sir Lynden to form a government. The following year, the PLP held an election and won by a landslide.

The only difference between then and now is that although there might be a tie on the House floor, there is already a Speaker in the chair to break the tie. This was not so in 1967.

The next few months promise to be interesting.

# Christie and PLP have zero credibility

EDITOR, The Tribune.

THE credibility of the Leader of the Opposition and his party went into a rapid nosedive during their single unproductive and disastrous term in office. Their inability to perform and deliver on promises, even basic ones, as well as a frenzy of scandals, resulted in their prompt firing by the Bahamian people.

Not only has the Opposition's credibility not improved. It has dwindled even more over the past five years. Incompetent in government, they have proved as bungling, indecisive and divided in Opposition. Not only are they unprepared to return to office. They were unprepared for the role and responsibilities of Opposition.

In the face of the most severe economic crisis to hit the Bahamas since the Great Depression, the Opposition, which borrowed approximately \$800 million in better times, with little to show for it, proposed reckless ideas which would have worsened the impact of the global financial meltdown on the domestic economy. The Opposition has no credibility on the economy.

Having campaigned against an Independent Boundaries Commission, and after failing to propose measures to create one, the Leader of the Opposition now says he supports such a commission. It is a classic case of late-again. The Opposition lacks credibility on democratic reform.

Despite incurring a nearly quarter million dollar debt to ZNS, a public corporation, and after a court judgment to pay what they legally owe, the Opposition continues to rant and rave about public expenditure. The Opposition has no credibility when it comes to the nation-

## LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

al budget and financial responsibility.

In five years, the Opposition couldn't finish the plans for a new Straw Market, let alone build one. In the same period, the FNM built a new Market, was instrumental in causing the construction of a new straw and craft market to be built at Cable Beach, and will begin the construction of a new craft market downtown. The Opposition has no credibility when it comes to keeping promises to Bahamian artisans and craftspeople.

The Leader of the Opposition enjoys talking at length about his many plans for the Bahamas. But while he plans to keep planning and plans to keep talking, he does not plan to act. Plans and talk he has in abundance. What he does not have is a record of accomplishments.

After Hurricane Irene, Mr Christie, as is so often the case, had much to say on how the country should respond to hurricanes. He is an expert of sorts if one believes that talk is action. Following the blow of three hurricanes, Jeanne, Frances and Wilma to their island, Mr Christie made this solemn vow to Grand Bahamians:

"The macroeconomic strategy, which will be formulated in close consultation with the Port Authority, will form the basis for a form of Marshall Plan for Grand Bahama to restore the economy and society of the Island to the pre-Hurricane position." Of course no such plans ever materialised, much less action.

The Opposition's plans often appear out of thin air. In his

Farm Road constituency, Mr Christie failed to utilise a \$100,000 grant designed to assist MPs in helping to improve the communities within their constituencies. Despite the fact that most MPs had already planned and executed various initiatives, the former Prime Minister said he was still planning.

The Opposition is full of plans, especially after leaving office and failing to implement their previous plans, promises and proposals. They talked about a plan for national health insurance. It never happened. They talked about plans for everything from a national stadium to Baha Mar to a new LPIA. None of it ever happened on their watch.

Now the same Opposition that miserably failed to fulfil their promises is attempting to use slick advertising to convince Bahamians of their new and improved plans which are really their old plans repackaged and recycled in time for a general election.

If talk was the same as action, Perry Gladstone Christie would be the busiest man in the world. But it isn't. Which is why Mr Christie's record is so weak. Even in good times he accomplished very little. In difficult or bad times, he is a disaster.

The Opposition doesn't simply have a credibility gap with the Bahamian people. They have a credibility gulf which cannot and will not be bridged as long as the same people who proved to be a disaster from 2002 to 2007 are the ones charged with carrying out plans they could never move from talk to action, from their minds to reality.

BLS  
Nassau,  
December 2, 2011.

## Bran shows true colours

EDITOR, The Tribune.

Back in the 1970s, it was discovered that President Nixon had an enemies list, and unfortunately a very newcomer to politics here has already apparently started his own enemies list beginning at the top.

When Mr Branville McCartney said, indicated or whatever, that he was willing to run in the constituency of North Abaco merely to try to defeat Hubert Ingraham and was indeed also willing to lose and hope the PLP would win, is indeed the most revealing thing about his character.

It is now very clear and now very obvious and it's now very out in the open to see that unfortunately Mr McCartney's quest is to not be a part of the political process, not be a productive member of

parliament, not be a statesman but only intends to proceed with a personal vendetta against Hubert Ingraham, and worse, just forget about all the people in the constituency of Bamboo Town. Shaft also Bamboo Town in the process too?

Although his quest was obvious in the past that he just wants to be Prime Minister, he has stated very clearly now that he is indeed not concerned with those who are also counting on his coat tails to maybe catch a seat themselves.

To even personally lose a possible seat as long as one man, Hubert Ingraham cannot serve the people of North Abaco is ludicrous.

All citizens are now keenly aware that we too could be placed on Mr McCartney's enemies list. If he does not

like something in any business we may work in, he's not coming after the business; he's coming after you/us.

Yes indeed, we've listened, tried to understand his point of view, but fortunately for all of us he has now made his view extremely clear. He is in fact not quite mature enough, which indicates a definitive lack of leadership and willing to sacrifice others.

Somewhat childlike and sadly indeed too green for the job. We'll wait and take a look in another five years.

Thank you, Mr McCartney, for making your views absolutely clear — it is indeed all about you.

HOLY MOSES  
"Scared to get on the list"  
Nassau,  
November, 2011.

## Is politics insoluble?

EDITOR, The Tribune.

OBVIOUSLY, some of the spokespeople for the Opposition think we are so gullible we will accept cute slogans as possible ways to fix the myriad of issues the country faces.

They act as if they didn't have a hand in getting the country where it is in the first place. Their lack of public policy recommendations is discouraging.

Ever notice how Opposition politicians run to any commotion they think will get their

picture in the newspaper? Some of them seem to think it's their role to stir upset. Why not lead and encourage settlement of disputes instead? Of course it's easier to stir the emotional pot. It's a different matter to show leadership and encourage people to do the right thing even if it might not serve one's political advantage.

No political party, when in Opposition, seems above it. They're just different versions of how to divide and conquer to gain the ultimate prize of political power.

Surely on "big" national issues like the national debt, education and boundaries, just to name a few, the political parties must be able to close ranks and offer ideas for improvement? But instead we mock each other and call that leadership.

It's fun to jest but, surely after 38 years of independence, many of the issues that have been around for decades should have been resolved by now. So it begs the question: Is politics insoluble?

Yours in Liberty,

RICK LOWE  
Nassau,  
December 2, 2011.

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LOCAL NEWS

# MP accuses FNM of not doing enough to tackle crime

By **KHRISNA VIRGIL**

AN OPPOSITION MP has accused the government of not investing enough time and energy in the fight against crime and other social ills.

At a press conference yesterday, PLP MP for Yamacraw and former Social Services minister Melanie Griffin said the FNM should be doing more to protect the rights of Bahamians.

She said: "This was the view of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations General Assembly.

"They encouraged the Bahamas, among its recommendations, to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Domestic Violence Act.

"Further, to continue to take effective measures to address the serious social problem of rape and to reinforce its legislation concerning domestic violence against women."

Her comments follow the discovery of the bodies of two murdered women in as many weeks.

Echoing her colleague, PLP Senator Hope Strachan said the FNM's lack of concern

about social issues has contributed to the escalation of crime and violence in recent years.

"We now have to change our focus, from building and putting up buildings and monuments, and focus on building our people, building our families. We can't continue to ignore our people," she said.

"The country now laments murder 117 and 118, both female victims, whose bodies were found bloodied, lifeless, and abandoned. These women are more than numbers and statistics," she said.

According to Mrs Strachan, the PLP's 'Project Safe Bahamas' will "highly improve the likelihood of survival among women threatened by violence".

The plan, she said, is to partner with churches and civic groups to provide safe houses for women at risk.

Rape victims will see their attackers caught, tried and sentenced speedily under a PLP government, she said.

Mrs Strachan said the PLP will also maintain a hard-line policy on gun possession and smuggling.

"We will strengthen border

patrol to interdict the transportation of illegal firearms in and through out country.

"More strongly, we are warning, even now, that those found in possession of illegal firearms shall not have an option to be heard in a Magistrates Court, but their matters shall be heard in the Supreme Court where the penalty is far stiffer."

Responding to the comments last night, Minister of State for Labour and Social Development Loretta Butler-Turner said: "It is regrettable that any political party and its officers should seek to gain political points in the public arena regarding the rate of crime or homicide in any sector of our society.

"Crime against all of our citizens, men, women or children is unacceptable. Moreover, it is the government's responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all citizens and residents."

She said the recent enactment of a compendium of anti-crime amendments clearly demonstrates the government's "unwavering commitment" to dealing expeditiously and forcefully with

criminals such as murderers, rapists and paedophiles.

Mrs Butler-Turner said: "It is curious to note the absence of the Opposition Leader and his colleagues, inclusive of Senator Hope Strachan and MP Melanie Griffin, at the official launch of the 'Volunteer Bahamas' initiative, whose mandate is to address the myriad social challenges facing our country through a holistic transformative programme involving all Bahamians.

"Actions clearly speak louder than words. When called upon to act, the opposition is typically paralysed – preferring cheap talk over action. Now they seek to exploit the pain and suffering of one sector of our society over another."

Mrs Butler-Turner said women, men and children all deserve to be protected by the law and law enforcement agencies.

"This is why successive Ingraham administrations have advanced laws, social assistance and programmes to enhance the quality of life of all Bahamians while protecting the most vulnerable in our society," she said.

# BRAN: 'DNA NOT FALLING APART'

By **SANCHESKA BROWN**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
sbrown@tribunemedia.net

THE DEMOCRATIC National Alliance intends to introduce its full slate of 38 candidates before the new year, DNA leader Branville McCartney said yesterday.

Refuting claims that the party is "falling apart at the seams", Mr McCartney said the DNA is stronger than ever and intends to hold a convention in the near future.

"We not falling apart at all. The DNA is growing every day. Its getting stronger and stronger.

"We have been in existence for six months, became a major party and we made history in six months.

"We will be running 38 candidates – one person for every constituency," he said.

"We have an over-subscription for candidates. People want to be part of the DNA. As a matter of fact, we had to do some shuffling and make some changes because of the reduction of seats. We will come out and inform the public as to who is going to be running in what area shortly."

Mr McCartney's comments came after Philip Thomas and Sammie "Star" Poitier, the

DNA's former candidates for High Rock and South Beach respectively, both had their nominations withdrawn.

The men claim a series of arguments between themselves and the party leader led to their ouster, but Mr McCartney said this was not the case.

"They were supposed to do quite a number of things they did not do. Whether we were over-subscribed or otherwise, if persons are not doing their work they will be removed.

"We have to take this very seriously. We have to make

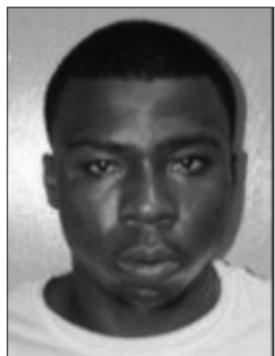
sure we get the best persons for the constituencies; we only want the best people," he said.

"When we become the government, being a member of parliament is going to be very crucial. We have said before we believe in a recall system, so even if you are a DNA MP and you are not doing your job, I'll be the first one to recall you.

"We need to put the people and the constituencies first and if we want to move this country forward in any fashion, we need to start ensur-

ing that we do what is best – not what is political, but what is best for the country."

Mr McCartney said the DNA intends to hold a town meeting to discuss good governance and explain to the public why some nominations have been pulled.



**CHARMAR REGINALD WOOD**

## MAN CHARGED OVER SHOOTING

By **DENISE MAYCOCK**  
Tribune Freeport Reporter  
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – A 21-year-old Freeport man was charged in the Freeport Magistrate's Court yesterday in connection with a shooting at East Sunrise Highway.

Charmar Reginald Wood, also known as Jamal Woods, appeared in Court Three before Deputy Chief Magistrate Helen Jones on charges of causing grievous harm and causing damage.

It is alleged that on December 3, the accused fired shots near Candie's Cabana, causing damage to the rear passenger window of a Nissan Altima. A 26-year-old man was shot in the upper right arm.

Wood pleaded not guilty to the charges. He was remanded to Her Majesty's Prison, Fox Hill until June 27, 2012, when his trial is set to begin.

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LOCAL NEWS



CLEAN-UP CREWS in action on Harbour Island.

# Facelift for Harbour Island

By CHESTER ROBARDS  
Tribune Senior Reporter  
crobards@tribunemedia.net

HARBOUR Island, playground of the rich and famous, received a bit of a face-lift this past weekend through the efforts of the Bahamas National Coastal Awareness Committee, the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and several of their affiliates.

The two-day trash hauling venture was much more than just a black garbage bag campaign. CGT Contractors and Developers sent in a convoy of pay loaders, dump trucks and cranes to help move the heaviest of the debris from the streets of the island, while a force of almost 40 volunteers dug in to the garbage with their hands.

Charity Armbrister, director at the Ministry of Tourism for the central and southern Bahamas, insisted that cleanliness is of paramount importance to Harbour Island and the islands of the Bahamas in general.

"This is a very critical area for all of the islands," said Ms Armbrister.

"Obviously there are some islands cleaner than others



WORKERS hauled trash, moved debris and freshened up the island.

but from time to time our exit surveys and the visitor's voice tells us we have a problem."

She said clean-up campaigns like the one held in Harbour Island serve to bring awareness to local communities.

And though Harbour island is usually a litter free community, according to Peter Higgs, owner of Hibiscus Landscaping, there is a need for more awareness, and more trash cans across the island.

"The clean-up campaign is really nice for the island right now after the hurricane blew through and really messed our island up," he said.

Jermaine Johnson, chief councillor for the island, said local government plans to strictly enforce litter laws from now on.

In 2005, Harbour Island was rated the best Caribbean island by *Travel and Leisure Magazine*, and Mr Johnson insisted the island can return to its former glory.

"We're getting it back to where it used to be," he said. All hands were on deck as volunteers from the Bahamas

Reef Environment Educational Foundation, Dolphin Encounters and even the Organisation of American States tackled huge piles of debris created by man and nature.

Clay Sweeting, PLP candidate for North Eleuthera, came over from Spanish wells to assist with the effort. He also donated shirts for the volunteers.

He said: "Harbour Island is one of the most beautiful places in not just the Bahamas, but the Caribbean. It's important to keep that legend alive and in order to do that, this island has to be pristine."

A prize went to Harbour Island residents Ian and Cathy Ross for the best kept yard on the island.

Ms Armbrister insisted that the Bahamians have to keep up their reputation through the up-keep of their islands.

"Visitors tell us when they see the islands are unclean," she said. "They have a real problem with that and we should too."

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# NIGHTCLUB OWNER: 'FIRE WAS ARSON'

from page one

ing the plans for his building. "Da Balcony was definitely in talks with the Bay Street redevelopment people," Mr Mitchell said. "We had some very big plans in terms of adjusting the whole concept of the building."

Mr Mitchell said discussions concerning the plans "seemed to be very positive" and he was "100 per cent in support".

What will happen now that the fire has destroyed the building is uncertain, but Mr Mitchell believes the redevelopment should go ahead as planned.

"Right now, there's a lot of after-the-game adjustments," Mr Mitchell said. "People are talking, everyone has some speculation of what happened. Fact is, there was a negotiation in progress and that shouldn't be changed."

Named St Cuthbert's Anglican Church when built in 1893, it came to be known as the Seaman's Chapel because of the sponge fishermen who worshipped there.

Later, it was used as a Sunday School classroom by nearby Christ Church Cathedral.

Even through decades of use as a commercial space, the arched windows and pitched roof remained the mark of a former church. Now, no one can say what it will look like in the future.

"Now, we should have a more beautified building. It's a new opportunity and something we are looking forward to, unless someone notifies us different. There shouldn't be any reason why that train of thought should change," Mr Mitchell said.

Vernice Walkine, co-chair of the DNP, said it is too early to say how negotiations will progress, but she also hopes to continue with the redevelopment.

She said: "We have our plans and we want to move forward, but we have no idea right now how the plans will be affected. It's still too early to make a definitive statement."

# NEW SIDEWALKS BUILT



THE Ministry of Public Works and Transport is building new sidewalks on Madeira Street and some nearby side streets in the Palmdale area. A work crew is seen here preparing to install a sidewalk on Montgomery Street.

Photo: Letisha Henderson/BIS

# TWO MPS QUIT FNM PARTY

from page one

(PLP) still standing at 17, the DNA at one, and now two Independents.

Under such a Parliamentary make-up, political observers have stressed that it would be nearly impossible for a government to function as every vote would ultimately come down to the Speaker of the House, (who would be removed from the 21 MPs on the governing side) having to cast his vote in favour of a government motion to see it pass the Parliament.

If Mr Wright or Mrs Grant were to resign their seats as MPs, it would force a by-election in their respective constituencies.

As it currently stands, it is unknown if Mr Wright, or Mrs Grant have entered into any agreement with either the PLP or the FNM or will remain for the duration of this session's sitting as Independent Members of Parliament.

Speaking with *The Tribune* yesterday, FNM Chairman and MP for Sea Breeze Carl Bethel said that he has been at their party headquarters on Mackey Street manning the phones for hours and has yet to receive any official documentation from either Mr Wright or Mrs Grant

on their resignations.

However, Mr Bethel said that it appeared as if the pair were "resigning to the press first".

"If this is true, we wish them a fond farewell, and wish them all the best for the future," he said.

"This party will go on, unbent, and unbowed, with our heads held high to serve the Bahamian people to the best of our ability by the grace of God. Win or lose.

"If they were to resign from Parliament, they would have to deliver their letters to the Speaker of the House of Assembly and that may be the option they would wish to do," he said.

However, calls to the Speaker of the House, Alvin Smith, confirmed that the pair have not in fact resigned their Parliamentary seats as no official notice was handed in to either the clerk or Mr Smith personally.

Mr Bethel continued: "We have been through issues like this before and we have triumphed. The party is bigger than any one member. It is bigger than the ambitions and goals of any one or two persons. The party, as a social tool which embodies at least 50 per cent of the Bahamian people, will continue. We do not feel, nor do we have

any reason to believe that the actions of one or two individuals is going to impede the strength or the vigor of this governing party leading into an election. It will not happen."

Mr Bethel said that the FNM has always had, and will always have an "open door" policy with respect to its members.

"It has always been accommodating. It has always been open to the legitimate aspirations of all of its members. If persons have developed differences with the party or the directorate, we are sorry and respect their views. But will it cause the party to be weak on the ground (in 2012)? No, it will not.

"The Bahamian people can rightfully expect that the same attention to duty that they have become accustomed to out of the FNM will continue, despite the actions of two persons," he said.

Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham last night shrugged off reports that Mr Wright had left the party. Stating that Mr Wright was a good and longstanding party member, Mr Ingraham said he could not comment on the matter as he had not received written notice of the decision.

from page one

he was prepared to make submission with respect to bail.

Fraser, 54, was convicted last Tuesday in Magistrate's Court of having unlawful sex with a minor between July 2005 and February 2006.

Prosecutors argued that the minister abused his position of trust by having sexual relations with a girl he had agreed to counsel.

He was originally charged with the offence in the summer of 2006, but freed a year later. A retrial started in 2008.

After several delays, Deputy Chief Magistrate Carolita Bethel handed down the guilty verdict and sentenced Fraser to three years at Her Majesty's Prison.

Mr Mangra informed the magistrate at the ruling that he intended to appeal the ruling

and sentencing, and have the execution of the sentence at the prison stayed.

When the bail application was presented yesterday, prosecutor Darnell Dorsette immediately objected to the application on the basis that the prosecution had not received notice of the application within four days of the hearing and that they were not in possession of the full transcripts from the previous trial.

She, however, informed the court that she was prepared to proceed in which case Justice John noted that her objection was not necessary.

As to not having the written arguments ready for court

and Mr Mangra's desire to continue without them, Justice John inquired: "Why should we part from the normal practice of the court?"

Mr Mangra went on to explain that the documents were already written, but his office had not had the opportunity to have them forwarded to the court, which he said could "be ready as early as this afternoon".

Justice Conteh replied that in cases concerning bail and appeals where attorneys represent clients coming before the appellate court: "When you come, you come prepared," adding that "you come with a fully loaded gun, if you will to convince the

court".

After the matter was adjourned, Fraser was escorted downstairs and out of Cloughton House into a waiting police car to be taken back to Her Majesty's Prison while a number of bystanders on Charlotte Street watched him leave. Mr Mangra spoke to the press concerning Fraser's appeal. He said that

his client was not satisfied with the conviction and "consequently, we have appealed that decision to the Court of Appeal".

While not going into specifics, Mr Mangra noted that they are appealing on the grounds that the some of the evidence presented during the three-year trial had been prejudicial to his client and that the facts presented did not support the ruling made by Deputy Chief Magistrate Bethel last Tuesday.

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- Provide agronomic direction for the healthy growth of the golf course grasses, trees, wetlands, and other plant materials.
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## LOCAL NEWS

# Looking to farming's future

by JOHN HEDDEN

SO FAR in this series, we have briefly examined various aspects of agriculture, including its history, technology, and infrastructure, its viability, the existing government policy, and the formidable obstacles farmers face.

To date, nothing thrown at the problem has stimulated anything – be it politicians, ministers, ministry staff, or the few brave farming souls who seem to end up “eating dirt”.

So what is the way forward for agriculture and farming in the Bahamas?

We have no soil. We have no native mineral fertilisers. We have a raw limestone rooting medium. We have fresh water in limited supply.

We have a good winter climate.

As any fruit grower will tell you, we have hurricanes. We have loads of bugs and diseases. We have a consuming public with cultured, beautiful nails, green with cash and, allergic to the very idea of brown soiled hands. That, pretty much, covers the physical environment.

Oh, I forgot to mention the sunshine, plenty of it; we do, after all, cultivate tourists, and quite a crop. Though, like our produce, I can't vouch for the quality.

As for infrastructure and government policy, we have a very harsh climate with no favourable conditions to encourage any entrepreneurship, unless you are affiliated with the appropriate powerful

entities.

Marketing is hampered by our geography, and the native tastes tend toward name brands and imported foodstuffs. The costs of food production are very high, and genuine land tenure is pretty much unavailable to the normal farmer.

All of this tells me that sustainable agriculture and self-sufficiency are also pretty much a figment of the politician's imagination.

Yet we hear noises to the contrary all the time. Agricultural production accounts for less than 1 per cent of the country's economic output, and this tells me that something is very wrong. Pretty forlorn isn't it?

In order for any semblance of successful farming to take root in the country, the government must first create a favourable economic and political climate for the agricultural entrepreneur, with the understanding that there are no such things as sustainability and self-sufficiency in the local farming sector.

With this in mind, is the government going to put in place the incentives and the policies that will genuinely encourage investment and application of modern techniques in agriculture?

## What is needed?

First of all, we need a good and sound policy that plants the farmers firmly and legally on the land for at least three generations.

Conditions can and should be built into any contract, and the option for a grant or purchase must be included at the end of the contract period.

Remember the Homesteading Act introduced by the US government? Remember the building ordinance of the Redlands area of Florida? One dwelling for every 15 acres of farmland.

We also need a good solid policy to encourage the devel-



**GREENHOUSES** at Lucayan Tropical in Nassau, which is leading the way in the Bahamas in more advanced agricultural development.

opment of the small business model, which would necessarily include the small farmer.

We have yet to realise that the small business creates a method of employment and reward that no mega-development can provide. And the cost of investment per job created does not range into the millions of dollars.

We have to leave our “plantation mentality” of employment behind and now become the planters.

The country must also equip the sector with an efficient and practical group of agricultural staff who are capable of assisting farmers with all aspects of production and marketing.

In other words, the Ministry of Agriculture must be ploughed in, re-seeded, and replanted from the staff up – even to the minister responsible for the sector.

The government must also be prepared to make an investment in the infrastructure of farming, including: communications, access to farm areas, utilities education, and access to financial tools.

Extension services must also be instituted, and must include knowledgeable and practical staff, fruit and vegetable trials and demonstration plots, reforms to the primary and secondary school systems, and of course, a well-structured programme affiliated with the College of the Bahamas.

Concessions must be offered to farmers on import and tax obstacles. These must genuinely encourage investment and growth in the sector.

Again, conditions must be put in place that disavow favouritism and ensure transparency in the award policy. Strict monitoring must be the rule of the day. Other measures must include: duty free fuel and energy that will help accelerate the move towards mechanised and irrigated agricultural production by lowered costs.

A spin-off of equipment use will be the lower cost of labour intensive grow-out, so assisting in reducing the farm gate price.

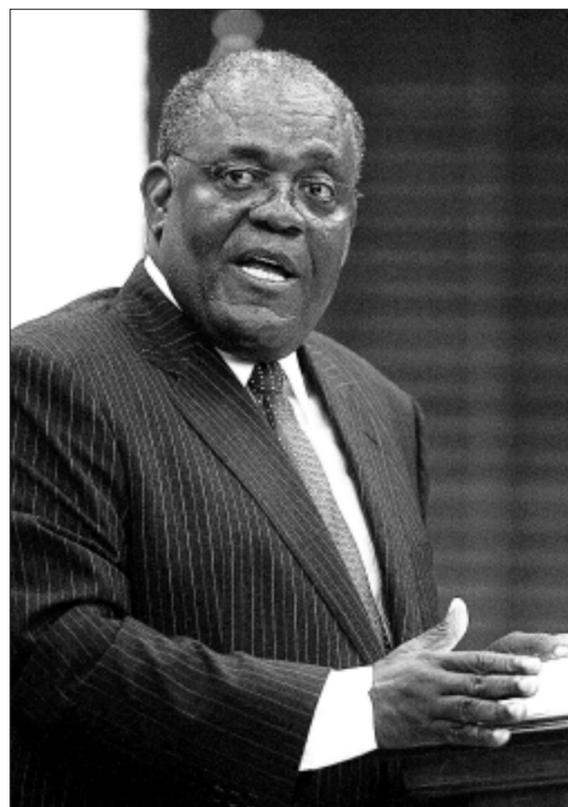
All these measures are financially costly – a minimum of \$5000 per acre for start-up – and so the government needs to create an environment where private sector investments and partnerships are encouraged.

This again requires the removal of the spectre of political interference from the programme.

The really interesting thing about this kind of scenario comes from the opportunities for free trade incentives for developing countries under the World Trade Organisation and the FAO of the United Nations.

International trade concessions can be made, and financial support is available for the design and implementation of “green” farming methods.

This kind of support can, and should be, actively sought by our “keyed-in public ser-



**PRIME MINISTER** Hubert Ingraham ‘must take the bull by the horns’ over the issue of agriculture to move from the policies which exist today, writes John Hedden.

vice” on behalf of the Bahamian farmer.

Active marketing strategies must be developed; as must storage, transport and product standards, including pesticide use, to ensure quality and consumer safety.

Seminars between producers, the middlemen, and the consumer must be brought into play to develop a good dialogue.

For some unknown reason, the public service is the least public oriented of our institutions, and much prefers to operate hidden away in cavernous offices where John Doe can only hear his own echo.

As I have previously said, the Bahamian government in general, and the Prime Minister specifically, must take the bull by the horns over this policy issue and move from the subjective policies which exist today, well supported by and with overt political favouritism (at least that bit is transparent).

This move towards an objective policy cast in stone will be open, accessible, and a source of motivation to the small agricultural entrepreneur.

If the administration is serious, then it must first remove itself, and successive administrations, from the basic framework of farm production by putting a genuine and effective policy in place that cannot be interfered with by the politics of the day.

There now exist a few special pockets of more advanced agricultural development, including greenhouse production at Lucayan Tropical in Nassau and field production by the North Andros farmers around San Andros.

However, the vast majority of farms in the country still rely on the most basic practices which are essentially

slash and burn. As a result, production is inefficient and yields are minimal.

How do the farmers themselves develop a successful farming venture?

Firstly, the farmer has to be realistic about the size of holding desired, thus seeking a lease for a land area he is capable of working; not dreaming about the big time, and money like dirt.

Secondly, the farmer must realise the reality and effort needed to operate a business efficiently. Living out of a cheque book, or the money in the pocket, cannot build a successful venture.

Thirdly, the farmer must ensure all the necessary tools are available, along with a sound and well structured business plan.

Finance is essential and we must realise that for the start-up of a well structured field operation, a minimum of \$5,000 per acre is essential.

A good, solid, well-rounded education in farming practices, maintenance, and financial management is also required.

Minister, by all means tell us again that: “Farmers must become more competitive”; but this time provide us with the right tools.

An airy-fairy, wishy-washy, half-hearted agricultural plan is not the answer. Words do not germinate into any useful harvest, but actions and policies might just sow the seeds of a greener Bahamas.

You hail from the most industrious and independent island of the archipelago. Make your fellow islanders proud of their native son.

This is the second to last article of the series, but the final article will present an alternative view of farming and its history in the Bahamas – “The ironies of farming”.

**JOHN HEDDEN** holds degrees in botany from UWI Mona Campus and University of Reading UK and graduated from Government High School, Nassau, Bahamas. He has worked as a horticulturalist for the USAID project BARTAD Andros and the Ministry of Agriculture. He is now trying to establish a modern demonstration fruit and vegetable farm. He lives on Abaco and has worked with farmers there for the past 25 years.

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**Administrator's Remark:** *To our coaches and team members, I salute and congratulate you for this great milestone the Lord allowed you to reach. To Him be all the Glory. May you continue to be His champions on and off the field. Thank you for your stellar efforts.*

**"Victory comes from you, O Lord. May you bless your people." Psalm 3:8**

**The entire NCA School Community celebrates this victory and commends all who played a vital role in once again achieving the coveted title of BAISS champions.**



## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

# Jamaica PM calls December 29 general elections

By DAVID McFADDEN  
Associated Press

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — Prime Minister Andrew Holness announced on Sunday that general elections will be held in this island nation on December 29, a year ahead of a constitutional deadline and near the start of the crucial winter tourist season.

Elections were due by December 2012, but Holness said the Caribbean island's international partners and lenders needed to know before the end of the year if voters will give him a mandate to govern Jamaica for the next five years.

"Business people are confident in this government," Holness asserted Sunday night at a packed rally in the central town of Mandeville.

The 39-year-old Holness gave credit to his ruling Jamaica Labour Party for providing political leadership since the 2007 elections, laying a path for reforms and improving the debt-swamped island's economic performance after 18 years of opposition rule.

He was sworn in as prime minister on October 23 and quickly said he would root out



JAMAICAN PM Andrew Holness.

corruption, reduce debt and bureaucracy, attract foreign investment and fight poverty. He's also called for an end to links between politicians and slum bosses in vote-rich ghettos.

His predecessor, Bruce Golding, stepped down in October after four years as

prime minister when his popularity sagged due to his nine-month opposition to a US extradition request for a notorious gang leader.

Labour Party lawmakers unanimously chose Holness as their party's leader, and he automatically became prime minister.

Jamaica is "ready for a positive future," Holness told tens of thousands of partisans wearing the governing party's trademark green as he called the vote.

The winner of the December 29 election will face deep economic problems on this island of 2.8 million people.

Jamaica's debt stands at roughly \$18.6 billion, or 130 per cent of gross domestic product, a rate about 10 percentage points higher than Italy's and 20 points lower than Greece's.

Jamaica's economy has been on a meager upswing, but roughly 60 per cent of government spending still goes to debt and another 30 per cent pays wages. That leaves just 10 per cent for education, health, security and other parts of the budget.

The Sunday night gathering bristled with a festive feel as cheering, horn-honking caravans of Labour supporters celebrated in the streets, waving banners and dancing to reggae tunes pounding out of big speakers.

What remains unclear is how most voters in this heavily Christian nation will react to general elections coming so close to Christmas Day.

Holness' move comes as he navigates his government's first major controversy, with anti-corruption agencies investigating a troubled government programme and agency for alleged mismanagement of a stalled \$400 million roadwork programme financed by China.

In recent days, the CEO of the National Works Agency and Holness' transport and works minister have stepped down in the wake of the scandal. Holness has assumed responsibility for the troubled project and said no new work orders will be issued for the programme until an independent review is finished.

In a televised speech on Saturday night, Holness vowed that his government will launch a forensic audit of the infrastructure programme and publicly release its findings. He said he was aware the controversy "can create public alarm and disgust."

Portia Simpson Miller, chief of the opposition People's National Party, said Holness' pledge for a forensic audit is disingenuous and "too little too late."

Her party has unveiled its candidates for all 63 constituencies and says it is ready for elections.

## California man who killed 25 farmworkers denied parole

By DON THOMPSON  
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, California (AP) — A California man who was once known as the nation's worst serial killer was again denied parole Monday after he admitted his guilt for the first time before the parole board.

Juan Corona said he murdered and mutilated 25 farmworkers four decades ago because they were trespassing in the orchards north of Sacramento, said Sutter County Assistant District Attorney Jana McClung.

Parole officials decided Corona can try again in five years, McClung said after the two-hour hearing. It was Corona's seventh bid for parole from Corcoran State Prison.

Corona previously made incriminating statements to a prison psychologist.

However, "this is the first time that I'm aware of that he made that admission to the full board. He said it was trespassing and they were winos," McClung said. "He just doesn't seem to realize that what he did was wrong."

Corona, 77, has been diagnosed with dementia and mental illness.

No family members of his victims attended the hearing. Prosecutors said Corona targeted victims who had few relatives and likely wouldn't be missed.

"We have had no contact with survivors for two decades now," District Attorney Carl Adams said before the hearing. "The people who he killed were farm labourers who were itinerant. Most of them didn't have relatives who could be contacted back in the '70s at the time of trial."

Four of the bodies have never been identified. The bodies of 14 of Corona's victims were never claimed by family members after they were discovered in 1971.

Corona, a farm labour contractor with a history of mental illness, was convicted of stabbing the men, hacking open their heads and burying their remains near Yuba City, 40 miles north of Sacramento.

He told the parole board he stabbed his first victim with a kitchen knife, shot his second, and killed the rest with a machete, McClung said. However, there is no record of any of his victims being shot, she said, raising questions about whether there was another possible victim or if the shooting was a product of Corona's fading mind.

Corona walked unaided into the hearing, but his dementia was evident during his comments, McClung said.

"He was a little bit all over the road," she said. "He did start rambling a little bit."

Corona's attorney, Leon Harris III of Bakersfield, declined to comment before the hearing.

# Dominican-Haitian activist Sonia Pierre dies at 48

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — Sonia Pierre, a human rights activist who bravely fought discrimination against poor Dominicans of Haitian descent since she was a child, died Sunday, according to colleagues. She was 48.

The renowned activist died outside of the municipality of Villa Altigracia while being rushed to a hospital after suffering a heart attack around noon Sunday, said Genaro Rincon, a lawyer who works with Pierre's Dominican-Haitian Women's Movement.

Pierre's chronic heart troubles were first discovered in 2007 when she was in Washington to receive the Robert F Kennedy Human Rights Award honouring her work securing citizenship and education for Dominican-born ethnic Haitians.

Through the decades, her activism made her the target of threats in the Dominican Republic, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti, but it earned her recognition from overseas as a fierce defender of human rights, including an award from Amnesty International



HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST Sonia Pierre, head of the Movement for Dominican Women of Haitian Descent, poses for a photograph in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. (AP)

in 2003.

Pierre was one of 12 children raised in a dirt-floor barrack in a Dominican migrant worker camp and was just 13 when she was first arrested and threatened with deportation for leading her fellow Dominican residents of Haitian descent in a march for cane cutters' rights.

Since then, Pierre tirelessly fought to secure citizenship and education for the beleaguered minority of Dominican-born ethnic Haitians.

"She was like a sister to me," said Edwin Paraison, executive director of the Zile Foundation, a Haitian group that tries to improve relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. "The Haitian community has lost someone who was a huge advocate in the fight for Haitian rights."

An estimated 500,000 to 1 million ethnic Haitians live in the Dominican Republic, many in isolated village slums that dot the countryside. Most of those born in the Dominican Republic are descendants of Haitians who crossed the border fleeing violence or seeking economic opportunity.

When she won the Robert F Kennedy Human Rights Award in 2007, Pierre denounced what she said were "massive abuses" in the Dominican Republic against people of Haitian descent, particularly children.

"They suffer discrimination from the moment they are born," she said during the

award ceremony in the US Senate. "The authorities refuse to recognise them as Dominicans."

While Haiti has been plagued by poverty, violence and political instability, its eastern neighbour, with a population of more than nine million, grew out of its own early struggles to be seen as a comparative land of opportunity even as many Haitian migrants are exploited as cheap labour.

Police arrested Pierre in 1976 when she led her fellow Haitian-Dominican neighbours in a march to demand rights for those who cut sugar cane. She was jailed for a day and threatened with deportation to Haiti, where her mother was born.

"I was crying because I didn't know anyone in Haiti," Pierre once recalled.

Her advocacy also has made her and her family targets in the Dominican Republic. She was once chased out of her Santo Domingo office by a man waving a pistol. She was also punched at a stop light by another man who told her, "I know who you are."

Pierre insisted she was trying to help her people and not malign the Dominican Republic. "I am not a critic of my country, and this is my country," she said. "I am a critic of my government."

Paraison, a former minister of Haitians living abroad, said Pierre is survived by three children.

Funeral arrangements were pending.

## Man gets 20 years in jail for producing child porn

BALTIMORE (AP) — Federal prosecutors say a Hagerstown man has been sentenced to 20 years in prison for sexually abusing a child to produce child pornography.

Forty-three-year-old Robert Paul Hade was also ordered at Monday's sentencing to register as a sex offender.

According to Hade's plea agreement, a child told authorities that Hade had abused her from the time she was eight years old until she was 10.

A search warrant executed last year on Hade's home led to the recovery of pictures and a video documenting the sexual abuse of the child.

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# ON THE COUNT OF 1,2,3...



**GUESTS** at the opening, including a Miss World contender, check for 4G reception after the switch-on. Photos: **Felipé Major/Tribune Staff**

## from page one

investment phased over two years, is expected to cover the entire Bahamas by mid-2012. Geoff Houston, BTC's chief executive, said: "For us, it's all about trying to build services that are relevant and services that our customers really want and right now it's all about wireless broadband, right now it's all about the latest tablet. "That's what customers really want. "That's the future. Now The Bahamas can say, 'hey we're there, we're part of it.'" The company has earmarked up to \$10m for new stores, Mr Houston said, and plans to roll out up to three stores per month over an 18-month timeline. Grand Bahamians will receive the new wireless ser-

vice next week. The network will be expanded to cover Abaco, Eleuthera, and Exuma early next year. In August, BTC eliminated all connection charges for cell phone calls made within the Bahamas, doing away with long distance connection charges between islands and creating a single domestic rate structure. At last night's launch, Mr Ingraham said BTC's continued progress was evidence of the bold decision making of his government to privatise the company. "My government is motivated by one thing, to bring to consumers of The Bahamas the best of what is available in telecommunications globally, to ensure those services are reliable and accessible at affordable prices throughout The Bahamas," he said.



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**PRIME MINISTER** Hubert Ingraham addresses the audience and the media at the opening of the new store.

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